United Nations S/PV.3654

Security Council

Fifty-first Year

Provisional

3654th Meeting

Thursday, 18 April 1996, 9 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Somavía	(Chile)
Members:	Botswana	Mr. Nkgowe
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	Egypt	Mr. Elaraby
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Germany	Mr. Eitel
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Queta
	Honduras	Mr. Martínez Blanco
	Indonesia	Mr. Wibisono
	Italy	Mr. Fulci
	Poland	Mr. Włosowicz
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Plumbly
	United States of America	Mrs. Albright

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 13 April 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/280)

96-85490 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 9.30 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 13 April 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1996/280)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): In accordance with the decision taken by the Council at its 3653rd meeting, I invite the representative of Israel to take a seat at the Council table; I invite the representative of Lebanon to take a seat at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Algeria, Colombia, Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates to take the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Yaacobi (Israel) and Mr. Moubarak (Lebanon) took seats at the Council table; Mr. Farhadi (Afghanistan), Mr. Lamamra (Algeria), Mr. García (Colombia), Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba), Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mr. Bataineh (Jordan), Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Mr. Azwai (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Thanarajasingam (Malaysia), Mr. Snoussi (Morocco), Mr. Kamal (Pakistan), Mr. Allagany (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Abdellah (Tunisia), Mr. Tanc (Turkey) and Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bahrain, Canada, the Comoros, Djibouti, Iraq, Ireland, Japan, Mauritania, Norway, Oman, Qatar, the Sudan and Yemen, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Buallay (Bahrain), Mr. Karsgaard (Canada), Mr. Djimbanaou (Comoros), Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti), Mr. Hasan (Iraq), Mr. Campbell (Ireland), Mr. Takahashi (Japan), Mr. N'diaye (Mauritania), Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway), Mr. Al-Khussaiby (Oman), Mr. Al-Ni'mah (Qatar), Mr. Yassin (Sudan) and Mr. Obadi (Yemen) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1996/292, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. The Comoros has joined as a sponsor of the draft resolution.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1996/304, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Honduras, Italy, Poland, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw the attention of members to document S/1996/295, letter dated 17 April 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of resolution 5573 issued on 17 April 1996 by the Council of the League of Arab States.

Members of the Council have received photocopies of a letter dated 17 April 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, transmitting the text of the declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the situation in the Middle East, which will be issued as document S/1996/299.

It is my understanding that the Security Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the two draft resolutions

before it. If I hear no objection, I shall put the draft resolutions to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first put to the vote the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/292.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:
China, Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia

Against:
None

Abstaining:
Botswana, Chile, France, Germany, Honduras, Italy, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The result of the voting is as follows: 4 votes in favour, none against and 11 abstaining. The draft resolution has not been adopted because it did not obtain the required majority.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document S/1996/304.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Botswana, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Indonesia, Italy, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1052 (1996).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting on the two draft resolutions.

Mr. Elaraby (Egypt) (*interpretation from Arabic*): At last, eight days after the beginning of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, the Security Council has met to adopt a resolution calling for an immediate cessation of military operations which are a flagrant aggression against a country which was a founder Member of the United Nations.

The Egyptian Government has stated, and repeats again today, that it absolutely rejects the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. The people and Government of Egypt support the brother people of Lebanon in their tragedy; we support them in all international forums, including the Security Council and the General Assembly, giving Lebanon our full support for the defence of its people, its territorial integrity and its sovereignty.

Before turning to Egypt's position on the two draft resolutions, I should very briefly like to speak about the manner in which the Council has dealt with this matter since the Israeli aggression began. It has been marked by a negativism which will no doubt have unfortunate effects on the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly, in the Middle East region.

Lebanon requested an emergency meeting of the Council on Sunday, 14 April, but differences in the positions of members of the Council led to a delay in a favourable response being made to the request. Deferring a decision by the Council for eight days has enabled the aggressor to continue its aggression, flouting the principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations.

A very honest comparison of this case — in which Lebanon called on the Security Council to take the necessary measures under the Charter to protect it against aggression, to protect its people against raids, carnage and the forced displacement of thousands of innocent civilians — with that of minor aggression against a limited number of citizens of another State, when the Security Council adopted immediate, specific measures, strengthens the suggestion that the Security Council applies double standards, depending on the State that is the victim of aggression, its citizens and the country that launches the aggression.

The draft resolution submitted by the Arab Group shows the severity and scale of the tragedy being experienced by the Lebanese people following the Israeli aggression. The draft resolution co-sponsored by Egypt within the Arab Group reflects the following fundamental principles. First of all, it calls on Israel immediately to cease its military action and to withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory; secondly, it calls for

strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, and political independence of Lebanon; thirdly, it calls for the implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 425 (1978); fourthly, it strongly condemns the Israeli aggression, which has brought about high tolls of civilian casualties, led to the displacement of civilians and a massive destruction of the country's infrastructure and of archaeological and cultural sites; fifthly, it calls for participation in the reconstruction of Lebanon and for help in meeting the humanitarian needs of the civilian population; and, sixthly, it calls for redress for Lebanon for the loss resulting from the Israeli aggression.

Those are the main elements of draft resolution S/1996/292, submitted by the Arab Group, which, as I have said, show the severity and scale of the Israeli aggression, aggression which cannot be tolerated or passed over in silence by the Council. The credibility of the Security Council is at stake here. The whole world is looking to the Security Council as the body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, pursuant to Article 24 of the Charter.

In all frankness, I have to say that we find it very difficult to be convinced by the positions of those that opposed our draft resolution. What could prevent the Council from calling for an immediate cessation of military action and for strict respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon? Is it shameful to condemn aggression or to request compensation for Lebanon? It is indeed deplorable that the Council was not able to adopt this draft resolution. I should like to thank those States that supported the draft resolution, thus standing on the side of justice and law.

Turning to the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/304, which was co-sponsored by a number of States, I would first of all like to extend my appreciation and sincere thanks to Ambassador Dejammet, Permanent Representative of France, for his tireless and sincere efforts on behalf of the French Government in the last few days, efforts which led to this draft resolution. Although the Egyptian delegation supported it, we should like to point out that it does not contain all of the principles which should apply with regard to the situation in Lebanon.

The resolution does not clearly condemn Israel, and it does not deal with the question of the compensation to which Lebanon in is entitled for the loss of human life and the destruction of property. The resolution refers to Security Council resolution 425 (1978), within the context of relevant resolutions adopted by the Security Council. Resolution 425 (1978) is indeed still in force, but it has to be looked at as a whole. As I said, my delegation voted in favour of the resolution we have just adopted, for it calls for an immediate halt to hostilities and it reaffirms the need to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

The resolution adopted a few moments ago by the Security Council does not really cover the entire scope of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and does not live up to our expectations for what the Security Council's reaction to the aggression should be.

Our hearts are heavy and we suffer when we look upon the human tragedy that Lebanon has been undergoing in the last eight days in full view of the entire world.

We trust that the adoption of this resolution will indeed lead to the cessation of the hostilities and the military actions. We trust that the Security Council will shoulder full responsibility for the implementation of the resolution we have just adopted and that it will remain seized of the situation in Lebanon at this decisive turning point, so as to preserve some of its credibility, to ensure the triumph of justice and the purposes and principles of the Charter and to save the peace process in the Middle East, which has been seriously jeopardized.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): It was my delegation's expectation that the formal consideration by the Security Council on 15 April 1996 of the military incursions by the Israeli armed forces into Lebanon would have a salutary impact and result in the termination of its attacks. To our disappointment, however, not only have military actions continued, but they have in fact intensified, as evident in the brutal shelling of the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) compound earlier today, which has taken the lives of yet more innocent civilians. Clearly, in the face of these developments the Council must shoulder its responsibilities, as enshrined in the relevant provisions of the Charter, by taking immediate and effective action.

In the absence of such response, the credibility of the Council may be called into question. It is against this backdrop that my delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution and the resolution before us. We regret that no consensus could be reached on the divergent positions expressed by members of the Council, thereby precluding the submission of a consolidated text. This occurred

despite the obvious need for the Council to send a clear and unambiguous message for the cessation of hostilities.

The Indonesian delegation fully subscribes to the common elements contained in both the resolution and the draft resolution, these being the call for an immediate cessation of hostilities and respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. A cessation of hostilities is an essential first step in stemming further casualties and preventing the exodus of civilians, thereby leading to the restoration of normalcy throughout Lebanon. The call for respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon is a further reiteration of the international community's principled position, as reflected in Security Council resolution 425 (1978).

Also central to both texts is the recognition of the need for action by Member States and the United Nations to alleviate the sufferings of the civilian population caused by the conflict. The images of innocent civilians killed or maimed cannot but move the conscience of the international community. We must act now.

My delegation would be remiss in its duty if it failed to underscore the need to respect the safety, security and unhindered movement of UNIFIL, as well as of organizations engaged in humanitarian activities. It is gratifying to note that that concern is one unanimously shared by the Members of the Council.

While cognizant of the common threads between the resolution and the draft resolution, we recognize all too well the divergent elements which have proved to be irreconcilable. For the Indonesian delegation, it is quite clear where the onus of responsibility rests for bringing the current hostilities to an immediate end. It is equally clear that unless this is attained, the recent progress in the Middle East peace process, which we have all recently witnessed, would be in jeopardy.

Indonesia, for its part, has as a matter of principle attached importance to dialogue and negotiations as a viable modality to resolve conflict situations. With regard to the situation in the Middle East, including the situation in Lebanon, Indonesia has been consistent in its support of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978). In this context, we would like to reiterate our conviction that the military action in Lebanon cannot but be a violation of the aforementioned resolutions and in total contradiction of the aims and objectives of the Madrid peace process.

Mr. Martínez Blanco (Honduras) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation views with great concern the escalation of hostilities along the Lebanon-Israeli border and within Lebanon, which continues to cause human and material losses among the civilian population and which threatens the peace process in the Middle East and, consequently, international peace and security.

The military actions against Lebanon constitute a violation of its territorial integrity, its sovereignty and its political independence within its internationally recognized borders, and are a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, of international law, of relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 425 (1978), and of the 1949 armistice agreement between Lebanon and Israel.

These hostilities must cease immediately. The continued bombardments causing destruction and death in Lebanon are contrary to international humanitarian law and to the Fourth Geneva Convention. Their effect is to further deteriorate the situation in the Middle East, and to hamper the negotiations towards achieving a just and lasting peace. My delegation therefore attaches the greatest importance to the ongoing diplomatic efforts for the achievement of a cease-fire.

My delegation is justly concerned by the humanitarian crisis caused by the hostilities. The hundreds of thousands of persons fleeing the conflict are creating a real humanitarian emergency that must be attended to immediately.

Similarly, my delegation is concerned for the safety of the United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Actions against UNIFIL affect the fulfilment of its mandate. We regret that as a result of today's bombardment in their area, innocent civilians have died. We appeal to all parties to ensure the safety of UNIFIL and to allow for its freedom of movement.

Therefore, my delegation feels that the text of the resolution, which we co-sponsored and which has been unanimously adopted, is the appropriate response by the Security Council in order to alleviate this crisis.

Mr. Qin Huasun (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Today the Security Council is once again considering the question of Lebanon in order to issue a

response in this regard. We believe that it is imperative to do so in order to demonstrate the hope of the international community in general, and the Security Council in particular, that there will be an immediate cessation of hostilities in this region, so as to avoid any further suffering on the part of civilians.

The Chinese delegation expresses its profound concern at the large-scale military offensive launched by Israel in recent days in southern Lebanon, which has resulted in the loss of innocent civilian lives, the massive destruction of property and a large number of civilians' becoming homeless or refugees, consequently further escalating the conflict in southern Lebanon and aggravating the already tense situation.

We wish in particular to express our shock at the large number of casualties suffered by civilians as a result of the shelling that took place on 18 April in Lebanon. We strongly condemn any action that violates international law. We call upon all parties concerned to exercise restraint and put an immediate end to all hostilities in order to achieve a cease-fire, in an effort to ease the tense situation and safeguard peace and stability in that region.

We believe that Lebanon's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders should be fully respected, and that the relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 425 (1978), should be implemented.

The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) should not be obstructed in the implementation of its mandate. The security and safety of its members should be guaranteed by all parties concerned.

We call upon the international community, including the United Nations and its agencies, to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to the civilians of Lebanon in order to alleviate their suffering.

On the basis of these considerations, we voted in favour of the two draft resolutions.

The progress in the peace process in the Middle East has not been achieved easily; therefore, it should be treasured by the parties concerned. At such a sensitive and critical moment, we hope that all the parties concerned will exercise restraint and refrain from any action that may further intensify the conflict and undermine the peace process in the Middle East, so as to create conditions for the achievement of a just, comprehensive and lasting solution to the question of the Middle East at an early date.

Mr. Eitel (Germany): For the second time in four days, the Security Council is discussing the situation in Lebanon. This is not only justified but necessary, taking into account the extent to which the situation in Lebanon has deteriorated in the meantime.

An ever-increasing number of innocent civilians are becoming victims of the violence. More and more people are being killed every day.

During this Council's formal meeting on Lebanon held last Monday, Italy, on behalf of the European Union, expressed concern regarding the security of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Regrettably, this concern has proved to be more than justified. We call upon all parties concerned fully to respect the safety, security and freedom of movement of UNIFIL.

Today's shelling incident, in which more than 90 civilians were killed at a UNIFIL site, is particularly shocking. We want to express our sincere condolences to the families of the victims.

How do we get out of this situation? How can we stop the suffering? The violence must come to an end, and it must come to an end now.

International humanitarian law must be fully respected. The safety and security of civilians and other protected persons is of the highest priority, and must be ensured.

There must be a political solution on the basis of all relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 425 (1978). We believe that such a political solution, in the framework of the peace process, will best be helped by a decision of the Council that addresses the principal problems and at the same time commands the widest support. That is why we voted for the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/304, and that is why, in consequence, we had to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/292.

Mr. Queta (Guinea-Bissau) (*interpretation from French*): Over the past few days, intensive bombardments have been taking place along the Israeli-Lebanese border and within Lebanon itself, leading to heavy losses of human life and damage to property.

Guinea-Bissau, which itself has suffered from the ravages of war, is gravely concerned at this military escalation and, in general, at the deterioration of the situation in the Middle East, the effects of which could imperil the peace process. These hostilities, whose consequences are becoming daily more serious and more unforeseeable, must cease immediately.

To this end, Guinea-Bissau will support all peace initiatives. It encourages the initiatives being taken by certain countries of the region, which we hope will take into account the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, including resolution 425 (1978).

We deplore the incidents today, which have led to dozens of deaths in Lebanon, and we express our full solidarity with the families of the innocent victims.

We also express our sincere support for all those who have been affected by the military activities in the area - in particular, the hundreds of thousands of Lebanese who have, regrettably, been forced into an exodus within their own country.

In the light of the grave humanitarian situation, we wish also make an urgent appeal to the international community to come to the aid of the victims of the war in Lebanon.

For all those reasons, we voted in favour of both of the draft resolutions that were before us this evening in the hope that this would make a major contribution to the immediate cessation of hostilities and to the continuation of negotiations on a just and lasting peace in the region.

Mr. Wlosowicz (Poland): During the open debate on the situation in Lebanon held in this Chamber last Monday, the Polish delegation expressed its position with regard to the armed hostilities in southern Lebanon and their broader ramifications. What we are faced with today is an even more complex situation which could have far-reaching consequences for the parties involved, for stability in the region and for international peace and security.

Like other members of the Security Council, the Polish delegation was shocked by the news that arrived this morning, of the tragic death of some 100 civilians who had taken shelter in the compound of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and of the casualties among UNIFIL troops. Let me take this opportunity to convey to the Permanent Representative of Lebanon the condolences of the Polish delegation on that tragic event. I would also like to ask the Secretary-General to transmit to the Force Commander of UNIFIL the assurances of our sympathy and our support.

Today's developments are yet further deadly consequences of the use of violence in international relations. The events sparked by the artillery assaults on northern Israel have brought death and suffering to a great many people, have caused the destruction of property, including historic landmarks, and have threatened the peaceful future of the Middle East. The time has come to break this vicious escalation of the conflict.

We sincerely believe that the resolution we have just adopted offers an appropriate solution to the current phase of the crisis. First, it calls for an immediate cease-fire. This is indeed a *conditio sine qua non* for creating an atmosphere conducive to further steps towards normalization.

Secondly, it expresses the Security Council's support for ongoing diplomatic efforts aimed at a peaceful solution of the conflict. The Polish delegation attaches great importance to the forthcoming talks of the United States Secretary of State in the region. We also hope that the action undertaken by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France and by the Italian Foreign Minister, in her capacity as President of the Council of Ministers of the European Union, will bear fruit.

Thirdly, the resolution calls for strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries and for the security of all States in the region. This provision of the resolution reflects the position of the Polish Government, for which the rigorous observance of these principles constitutes the cornerstone of modern international relations.

Fourthly, the resolution places the humanitarian situation in an appropriate perspective. This is an issue of great significance for the Polish delegation.

Lastly, the resolution confirms the Council's concern about the security, safety and freedom of movement of United Nations peace-keeping operations, in this case UNIFIL. The Polish delegation has particular reason for stressing this point, since more than 500 Polish soldiers serve under the United Nations banner in Lebanon, and since the operation is under the command of a Polish general.

The Polish delegation's vote in favour of draft resolution S/1996/304 reaffirms its support for the peaceful coexistence of all States in the region and for the continuation of the peace process in the Middle East.

Mr. Park (Republic of Korea): As my delegation has already stated, in the formal meeting of the Security Council on Monday, we are gravely concerned at the continuing hostilities and the further deterioration of the situation in Lebanon, which has resulted in an increasing number of civilian casualties and the destruction of property. We were shocked at the news this morning of the death of more than 60 innocent civilians and of the serious injuries inflicted upon several United Nations personnel in a compound of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Given the gravity and urgency of the situation and its possible negative impact on the overall Middle East peace process, the Security Council must act promptly and resolutely. It has already been seven days since the tragic and senseless killing started. As the organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council should react to the situation in a resolute and timely manner so that the hostilities can be brought to an end immediately and so that the Middle East peace process is not derailed.

The draft resolution contained in document S/1996/304 is a clear expression of the collective will of the members of the Security Council. It also reflects the common wish and firm resolve of the international community, in that it calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities as well as for strict respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Lebanon as reaffirmed by resolution 425 (1978), and in that it calls upon Member States to respect the safety and security of civilians.

My delegation is satisfied to note that all the members of the Council, including my delegation, were able to accept that draft resolution. We take great pride in seeing that the Council has been able to act in unison in dealing with the extremely complicated issue at hand, which has significant bearing upon the peace and stability of the entire Middle East region. My delegation strongly believes that united action by the Council will carry a clear and credible message to the parties in particular and to the international community as a whole.

It was for these reasons that my delegation voted in favor of draft resolution S/1996/304. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to commend the delegation of France for having so successfully promoted consensus among the members of the Council, enabling us to act now in unity and in a timely manner.

My delegation would like to add a word of appreciation for the intensive diplomatic efforts being conducted by France, Italy, the United States and others to bring to an immediate end the senseless killing that has been taking place for the past seven days. We are convinced that the resolution we have adopted today will shore up these efforts.

Although the major thrust of draft resolution S/1996/292 was acceptable to the Korean delegation, we were well aware that some elements were contentious enough to be opposed by some members of the Council. It was in this context that we strongly encouraged France and others to promote a consensus text fully taking into account the urgent need for the Security Council to take action today. In our view, there was a window of opportunity which members could have utilized to promote a consensus text. However, it seems to us that that opportunity was not fully explored. It was for that reason that we decided to abstain in the vote on draft resolution S/1996/292.

Mr. Nkgowe (Botswana): The position of my delegation on the current situation in Lebanon was stated during the open debate held on Monday, 15 April 1996. We believe that the grave situation that now obtains in Lebanon could have been averted had the Security Council adopted a formal decision at the end of the orientation debate. This is an extremely serious matter, to which the Council should have reacted with the utmost urgency. Lebanese people have been massacred in the most brutal manner. The Israeli military actions have definitely gone beyond the limits of Israel's legitimate right to self-defence.

The present Israeli military activities in Lebanon constitute an outright invasion of that country. Bombs, rockets and other missiles are being directly targeted at the civilian population, resulting in death, suffering and extensive destruction of property. Even the headquarters of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has not been spared. UNIFIL buildings have been damaged and some UNIFIL troops have sustained injuries. The actions of the Israeli armed forces clearly put the lives of the United Nations forces in serious danger. We call upon Israel to respect United Nations personnel at all times.

The Security Council cannot afford to watch impassively the war tragedy that is unfolding in Lebanon. The Council should always be ready to respond in a timeously to situations that constitute a grave threat to international peace and security. The parties should cease hostilities immediately. In this regard, we welcome the content of the operative paragraphs of resolution 1052 (1996), which we have just adopted. They list the priority areas: immediate cease-fire, support for diplomatic efforts; respect for the territorial integrity and national sovereignty of Lebanon; the safety and security of UNIFIL personnel, and the need for humanitarian assistance.

It is our hope that the parties will comply with this resolution. It no longer serves any useful purpose to argue about who started the hostilities. The most important thing at this stage is to end the fighting and give peace a chance.

Mr. Dejammet (France) (*interpretation from French*): The Council is discussing the question of Lebanon three days after our previous meeting on the same subject. Fighting has continued. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have been forced to take to the roads. Men, women and children have been mown down. The French Government has expressed its feelings about the appalling tragedy which took place this morning. Today, as the Egyptian Ambassador said at the beginning of this meeting, it is time to act.

Diplomatic efforts have been taking place since the beginning of hostilities; they must be supported. These efforts are aimed at restoring lasting peace. We must first stop hostilities — that was the Council's immediate objective. It was with that objective in mind that we decided in voting on the two draft resolutions to vote for the draft resolution contained in document S/1996/304, which was capable of receiving a unanimous vote in favour, because it is essential to create as broad support as possible for an immediate cessation of hostilities by all the parties. The President of the French Republic expressed the urgent need for that today, saying:

> "This spiral of violence in northern Israel and southern Lebanon was, unfortunately, foreseeable, and it is humanly unacceptable. I solemnly appeal to all the parties involved in this conflict to establish a cease-fire immediately. Since the onset of hostilities initiatives have been undertaken, notably by France and the United States. I ask all the parties involved to accept an agreement on the basis of the various proposals put forward, or to be put forward, to put an end to this crisis. In that spirit, all who are working for peace must unite their energies and their efforts."

That appeal has just been confirmed by the unanimous vote in the Security Council. I wish to express the very deep and sincere gratitude of the delegation of France to Ambassador Elaraby. This vote, cast despite the difficulties and qualms to which he referred, reflects the constant and unshakeable determination of a great and responsible country — Egypt — to build peace.

This resolution supports the diplomatic efforts carried out in this regard. It also reaffirms — and this is equally important — a fundamental principle recalling all the previous resolutions on the situation in the Lebanon, including resolution 425 (1978) of 19 March 1978, which established the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. The Security Council is reaffirming its commitment to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized borders, as well as to the security of all States in the region, and it calls upon all concerned fully to respect these principles. That is equally essential.

This resolution contains necessary provisions to protect the civilian population and to ensure the security of UNIFIL, and it rightly insists on the need for humanitarian assistance. France, which has for several days endeavoured to provide assistance to the Government of Lebanon, hopes that this request, addressed by the Council to Member States, will be followed by action, that humanitarian assistance will be sufficiently generous to mitigate the suffering of the Lebanese people, and that the Government of Lebanon will be assisted in its efforts to reconstruct the country.

The Council's unanimity, which has just been expressed, will, we hope, give full weight and backing to the resolution and enable it to produce results: the cessation of hostilities by all the parties. We hope that the unanimous support given this evening to the diplomatic efforts under way will breathe fresh life into the peace process.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): My delegation, like others, has already had an opportunity, during the formal meeting on Monday dedicated to the situation in Lebanon, to express its thoughts and profound concern over what is happening in the Middle East. On that occasion, speaking on behalf of the European Union, we reconfirmed our commitment to the implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978). Tonight I wish to reiterate that statement. Italy is

gravely concerned by the continuing escalation in military activity in Lebanon, an escalation which has led to the loss of many — too many — innocent lives, and caused hundreds of thousands of civilians to leave their homes and wander the roads as displaced persons.

I would ask the Permanent Representative of Lebanon, Ambassador Samir Moubarak, to convey our deepest condolences to the families of the victims of this morning's tragic incident at one of the bases of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in which more than 100 innocent Lebanese civilians were killed and more than 100 wounded.

Italy calls once more on all the parties to show the greatest restraint and above all immediately to cease any and all military activities. Confronted by the deterioration of the situation, Italy, as President of the European Union for the current semester, has immediately taken the initiative of trying to define a European Union common platform of action.

The Political Committee of the European Union met in Brussels on 15 and 16 April. While recognizing the serious situation created by Hezbollah terrorist activities, as well as Israel's right to ensure its own security, the Political Committee expressed its most serious concern over the level of Israel's reprisals in Lebanon and over a possible escalation of the violence, which could have negative consequences for the civilian population and for peace in the region.

The Political Committee therefore gave a mandate to the Troika at the political level, headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Incisa Di Camerana, to make contacts in Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Israel for the purpose of urging the parties to reach an agreement on an immediate cessation of hostilities and of discussing ways to help the displaced Lebanese civilian population. The European Troika was in Damascus today.

In its contacts in the region, the Union intends to base its action on the following elements: first, the immediate cessation of all hostilities; secondly, reaffirmation of Europe's commitment to the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Lebanon, in conformity with Security Council resolution 425 (1978) and the Taif Agreement; thirdly, emergency humanitarian relief for the Lebanese people affected by the fighting, especially refugees; and, fourthly, condemnation of the acts of violence by Hezbollah and reaffirmation of Israel's right to security.

Italy continues to hope that the recent events, despite their gravity and the irretrievable loss of so many human lives, will not jeopardize the peace process, which remains of fundamental importance to all Members of the United Nations and to the entire world.

Finally, allow me to quote a statement of Mrs. Susanna Agnelli, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy. In a declaration issued in Rome a few hours ago, Minister Agnelli said:

> "The news of so many dead and wounded Lebanese refugees and of the 120 wounded in the UNIFIL camp has been received by the European Union with shock and profound consternation. The European Union believes that this escalation of senseless violence, which is taking so many innocent lives, must be absolutely stopped and renews its appeal to all parties concerned to cease immediately all military activities in the area."

Mrs. Agnelli is flying to Beirut tomorrow morning in her capacity as current President of the European Council.

Mr. Gatilov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Today the Security Council is once again considering the tragic events in Lebanon. Two days ago, at a formal meeting of the Council on this same issue, the Russian delegation had an opportunity to lay out its position on this question. Unfortunately, it must be said that the situation has a clearly defined tendency to escalate. The Israeli armed forces continue their bombardments and shelling, resulting in many casualties among the civilian population. A large-scale humanitarian crisis is unfolding before our very eyes. The number of refugees is already in the hundreds of thousands. The fragile peace that had been established in long-suffering Lebanon is now being destroyed. Invaluable historical monuments are threatened.

This morning the world was shaken by the report of the shelling by Israeli artillery of the headquarters of the Fijian battalion of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, resulting in the deaths of over 90 Lebanese civilians who had sought refuge in the area where the United Nations forces were deployed. The United Nations peace-keepers also suffered casualties.

The Russian delegation wishes to state that what is currently happening in Lebanon is unacceptable, for Israel's actions are undermining the sovereignty of the

State of Lebanon, hurting the civilian population and damaging civilian targets. The tragic situation that has developed in Lebanon can have the most unforeseeable consequences for the Middle East, threatening the process of Arab-Israeli reconciliation. As a sponsor of the peace process, Russian cannot but be disturbed by this.

In the current situation, it is essential to demonstrate restraint. A peaceful solution is required that provides for the cessation of the military action against Lebanon while not allowing terrorist attacks against the territory of Israel.

Our country is taking and will continue to take strong political and diplomatic measures with a view to helping put a halt to the present escalation of violence. This is the approach of the Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Primakov, in his intensive contacts with his foreign colleagues. We also support similar steps being taken by other States. We hope that all of these efforts will bear fruit.

Today the Security Council faced a difficult choice. A group of Arab countries introduced a draft resolution that did not receive the requisite number of votes in favour. In principle, the Russian delegation agrees with most of the ideas reflected in that draft resolution. But at the same time, in our view, it does not give a full picture of the very complex situation, passing over in silence such important aspects as the need to provide guarantees for the security of all States of the region and not to allow provocative military actions by extremists from the territory of Lebanon, which undermine the peace process and run counter to the intensive diplomatic efforts under way. That is why the Russian Federation was unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution and abstained.

The second draft resolution is more balanced. We would have preferred it to be worded more clearly and precisely. Some things could have been called by their names. However, the main point is that it does reflect support for an unconditional cease-fire and for the efforts to achieve peace. It clearly reconfirms all of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council on Lebanon, particularly resolution 425 (1978). Implementation of this resolution is still the basic condition for achieving a genuine settlement.

We hope that the adoption of the resolution will help to ensure an immediate cessation to the military actions and to achieve a normalization of the situation in the Israeli-Lebanese area. We see the main task as being to continue the positive dynamics of the peace process in the Middle East, and accordingly the Russian delegation voted in favour of the resolution.

Mr. Plumbly (United Kingdom): It is a source of satisfaction to my delegation that the Council has now unanimously adopted a clear, strong and balanced resolution, which we believe will underpin the efforts being made to resolve the present crisis.

The British Government remains deeply concerned about the situation as it affects both Lebanon and Israel. As we noted in our statement here on 15 April, the British Government has condemned the continuing rocket and other attacks by Hezbollah on northern Israel, which started the present crisis.

The British Government deeply deplores the loss of innocent civilian lives in Lebanon, in particular the terrible tragedy at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) base earlier today. I would like to extend the British Government's condolences to the wounded and to the families of all those killed during the recent hostilities.

What we must do now is to focus on the future and to do all that can be done to prevent further such tragedies. What is needed — a point on which the resolution is very clear — is an immediate cessation of hostilities. To prevent the recurrence of hostilities and to create a more stable situation, we must build on the 1993 arrangements. The United Kingdom fully supports the efforts of the United States and France in this regard. My Prime Minister had discussions to this end with Prime Minister Hariri in London on 17 April and has been in touch with President Chirac, President Clinton and Prime Minister Peres.

The British Government is convinced that the long-term solution to the problem will be the result of the successful conclusion of the Middle East peace process. We reaffirm our support for the implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978). We call on all parties to the peace process to redouble their efforts to reach a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Mrs. Albright (United States of America): The United States joins in expressing deep sorrow and shock at the loss of innocent civilian lives at a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) site in Lebanon this morning. We offer our condolences to the Government and people of Lebanon. And we extend our sympathies to the people of Fiji, whose peace-keepers were participating in the UNIFIL mission and suffered casualties.

During the last few years, we have seen moments of high hope and promise in the Middle East. We have heard eloquent pleas for an end to blood and tears and for an end to death, misery, suspicion and fear. We have heard calls for a new era symbolized by the olive branch and based on Anwar Sadat's statement that

> "there can be no happiness based on the detriment of others."

Today, more than ever, we have reason to recall those statements made in support of peace. We know that courage is necessary to restore momentum to the path of peace. And we know that those who pray for security and justice will find it only through reconciliation and peace.

Earlier today, President Clinton called upon all parties to agree to an immediate cease-fire. The Governments of Israel and Lebanon have welcomed the initiative. And the resolution we have just adopted also calls for a cessation of hostilities by all parties. An end to the fighting is essential if diplomatic efforts, in which Secretary of State Christopher is fully engaged, are to move forward. Undeterred by acts of terrorism, the goal of those efforts remains the same. And they are made yet more urgent by tragedies such as those that occurred today. That goal is a comprehensive and lasting peace throughout the Middle East.

Unfortunately, the draft resolution put before the Council by Lebanon and others was not one that the United States could support.

There should be no doubt that the actions taken by Israel were in response to Hezbollah strikes launched from Lebanese territory against civilian centres in Israel. The draft resolution sponsored by Lebanon and others did not mention this. It was one-sided and highly selective in its discussion of the violence. By singling out Israel, and Israel alone, for condemnation, it would have set back, not advanced, negotiations towards an end to the fighting.

This is a time for the Council, and for nations around the world, to renew the call for peace. We must do all we can to see that an incident such as today's will be viewed in historic context, not as a trigger to a new round of killing, but as the last explosion of sorrow prior to a new era of reconciliation and hope.

That process requires from the parties restraint and a willingness to confront directly the sources of violence. And it requires from this Council a sense of fairness and balance that is present in the resolution we have just adopted, but not in the draft resolution put forward by Lebanon and others today.

Let me add that our position on Security Council resolution 425 (1978) is unchanged. None of the principles in the resolution we have adopted can be fulfilled outside the context of the peace process.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Chile.

With the resolution we have adopted, we are unanimously making an urgent and specific appeal for an immediate cessation of the hostilities that are tragically affecting Lebanon and for the implementation of resolution 425 (1978).

Calm should be imposed on the tragedy. It is a matter of the lives of human beings, most of whom are civilians and who, in the final analysis, are the innocent victims of this sad and deplorable episode. Today's events in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) camp are so horrible that there are no words with which to condemn them. We urge Israel to put an immediate end to its attacks in Lebanon.

Chile's main concern in this debate has been the innocent victims in Lebanon and the humanitarian crisis in a country that is a friend of Chile's. Our hearts are now with that suffering people at another tragic moment in its history.

This morning, as President of the Security Council, I said that we could not let the day end without making an appeal for the cessation of hostilities, and that is what we have done this evening. However, we have not said everything that could have been said in these circumstances. The deaths of recent days and months in the Middle East are excessive, as are the collective punishment in Lebanon, the bombs in Israel and the insecurity for everyone.

Chile rejects force as a means of political solution — the anonymous force of terrorism and open military force, as well as the constant threat of the use of force.

We are all challenged to make the United Nations a place where peoples of the world can place their trust and where the rights of peoples are equally defended,

regardless of their power or their allies. I hope that some day the Security Council will make its first priority the security of people, the security of individuals, and that it will be a true Council for the security of mankind. That is not the current situation, and much remains to be done.

However, Chile hopes that the resolution we have adopted will help promote an end to the violence, bring peace to the souls of so many people of the region and be of assistance in the political process leading towards peace. We are thankful to everyone who is attempting to achieve that peace.

I now resume my function as President of the Council.

The Council has concluded its voting procedure. I shall now call on those speakers invited under rule 37.

I call on the representative of Lebanon.

Mr. Moubarak (Lebanon): My delegation would like, at the outset, to express its regrets and sympathy to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) command for the casualties suffered by the members of the Fijian battalion through the premeditated and clearly deliberate shelling of their headquarters today by the Israeli army.

We regret sincerely that the Council did not meet immediately on Sunday, 14 April, on our request to put an end to the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. We deplore also that the Council did not act swiftly to put an end to the Israeli aggression and that it took many days to take action on the Arab draft resolution. We deplore the fact that the Arab draft resolution was not adopted. That draft resolution represents the firm and constant position of Lebanon and the Arab world in particular, by calling upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity, to withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory and to fully implement all relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 425 (1978).

The draft resolution also condemns strongly the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which has taken a high toll in civilian casualties and has led to the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians and the massive destruction of Lebanon's infrastructure. Further, it requests the Secretary-General to launch a massive plan of action to assist the Government of Lebanon to overcome the hardships resulting from the Israeli aggression, in order to allow the Lebanese Government to sustain its reconstruction efforts; and it considers that Lebanon is entitled to appropriate redress for the destruction it has suffered, while holding Israel responsible for adequate compensation for such destruction.

We would like here to condemn the premeditated massacre perpetrated by Israel against displaced civilians sheltered in the Fijian headquarters, resulting in the deliberate massacre of 110 civilians, with 150 wounded. All of us have seen the savagery of Israel against the men, women and children of my country. This amounts to barbarity; it is in the best tradition of the distorted logic of Israel. We knew that such an electoral campaign of the Israeli Government in Lebanon would end in such bloodshed.

We would like to express our deep appreciation to the delegations of Indonesia, Guinea-Bissau and China, which backed the Arab draft resolution presented by the Egyptian delegation. This draft resolution embodies two very basic principles: the solidarity of the Arab world in respect of Lebanon and its constant position in favour of finding a solution to the endemic cycle of violence in my country, which is due in particular to Israel's non-implementation of resolution 425 (1978) of the Security Council.

In this regard, I would like to recall that 24 hours ago the Council of the League of Arab States, at the level of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, adopted unanimously the same text at the end of its special meeting, which took place in Cairo.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the President of the Security Council. We would like to thank you, Ambassador Somavía, for the friendly and responsible role you have been playing during all the proceedings of the Council. My Government and my delegation are very much aware of the positive role you have played, and I would like to thank you very sincerely for convening the Council in response to the Lebanese complaint.

We would also like to express our gratitude to those friendly delegations which have cooperated constantly with us in trying to bring about the success of the Arab draft resolution.

Finally, allow me to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the Arab Group, which has played a

most important, constant and helpful role in fully backing the Lebanese position in the Council.

We would like to reaffirm again that the only way to end the violence in Lebanon is through the full implementation of resolution 425 (1978). It is up to the Council to shoulder its responsibilities. This is our constant position, and we believe that the Security Council will act accordingly by implementing that resolution and putting an end to the Israeli occupation of Lebanon, which is the cause of the violence taking place today in Lebanon.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I thank the representative of Lebanon for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Israel, on whom I now call.

Mr. Yaacobi (Israel): I believe that this is a very difficult day for all of us.

We regret the loss of life among innocent people who were unconnected to those fanatic terrorists and to those hostile activities. As indicated by the spokesman of the United Nations, the tragedy that occurred today was caused because the Hezbollah launched Katyusha rockets at Israel from locations a short distance away from the United Nations position where innocent civilians had taken shelter.

We know that the Hezbollah have been cynically using civilians as a shield. Today the head of the Hezbollah political office admitted this himself. Now they are doing the same with United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) units, not for the first time. Unfortunately, this is how this tragedy happened today.

We send our sincere condolences to the families, and our hopes and wishes for a quick recovery to the wounded civilians and UNIFIL soldiers.

Unfortunately, we have not heard a word of condemnation from some of the Members of the Security Council who spoke tonight of those who initiated those hostilities. Three hundred Katyusha rockets were launched in the last few days targeting civilians in Israel. Many were injured, thousands left their homes and many are still living in shelters.

Prime Minister Peres announced today that we accept President Clinton's initiative to reach a cease-fire, to be implemented as soon as the other party agrees to implement it as well. We hope that the mission of United States Secretary of State Christopher to our region will bear fruit immediately, and that a cease-fire will be achieved without delay. We appreciate the efforts by the European Union and France in this respect as well. This, we hope, will put an end to the situation which forced Israel to retaliate and to use its right of self-defence against those who attacked innocent civilians — men, women and children — in many villages and towns throughout northern Israel. This is necessary to clear the way for the resumption of the peace process in the Middle East.

We believe that there is a coalition for peace which represents the majority of the people in the Middle East who share the desire for peace. We must join forces against militant fanatic terrorists everywhere — in Lebanon as well as in Egypt. We must overcome these immediate hardships, clear the way and continue with the peace process.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Biørn Lian (Norway): In the Council debate last Monday, I had the opportunity to express the deep concern of the Norwegian Government with regard to the critical and fragile state of the peace process in the Middle East, and to urge the parties involved in the use of force in southern Lebanon and northern Israel to stop the spiral of violence. It is with profound regret that we have witnessed today the tragic results of a lack of will to exercise such restraint.

The people and the Government of Norway are shocked by today's shelling by the Israeli Defence Forces of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) position at Qaana in southern Lebanon and by other recent Israeli actions, and we deeply deplore the heavy losses of civilian lives and the immense human suffering that have resulted from these actions. These actions are totally unacceptable and are out of proportion to the attacks by Hezbollah against targets in Israel. This escalation of the conflict can only serve the purposes of those who oppose peace in the region.

Norway is currently the most important contributor of troops to UNIFIL. We strongly deplore the casualties suffered by the Fijian contingent. It is totally unacceptable to put United Nations personnel at risk

through actions of the kind we have witnessed today, and earlier during the recent actions. We demand that Hezbollah put a stop to its well-known and cynical practice of establishing positions close to civilian or United Nations installations, and we demand that the Israeli authorities take every necessary step to prevent shelling of United Nations and civilian targets.

The seriousness of the situation should be clear to everyone. We urge both Israel and Hezbollah to cease immediately all military activities in southern Lebanon and northern Israel and to conclude a cease-fire. We strongly support the ongoing diplomatic efforts undertaken to this end by the United States, France and Italy, on behalf of the European Union.

It is against this background that I welcome and support the resolution adopted unanimously by the Security Council this evening.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Canada. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Karsgaard (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): As this is my first opportunity to address the Security Council during the month of April, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your conduct of the Council's affairs. We are convinced that thanks to your skilful leadership, the Council will perform its duties in a fruitful and effective manner. Allow me also to extend my congratulations to the representative of Botswana, Ambassador Legwaila, on the way in which he conducted the deliberations of the Council during the month of March.

(spoke in English)

Canada speaks today under distressing circumstances. We deeply regret the loss of civilian lives in Lebanon resulting from the attacks today, and we convey our heartfelt condolences to those who have suffered in these tragic events.

Canada joins with others in calling for an immediate cease-fire. We offer our strong support to those diplomatic initiatives that are under way in the region and hope that the parties will come to a negotiated agreement as soon as possible.

Beyond the terrible human suffering wrought by today's attacks, we must also look to the state of the Middle East peace process. Just a few months ago, the elections in the West Bank and Gaza seemed to augur well for peace and development in the Middle East.

We were appalled by the recent bomb attacks in Israel. The task of countries dedicated to peace, Canada included, has been made even more difficult by the escalation of hostilities in southern Lebanon and northern Israel. Canada firmly believes that the peace process is the best way of resolving the conflict that has gripped the Middle Eastern region. We call on all parties to resume negotiations towards a just, comprehensive and lasting peace settlement.

In supporting the peace process, Canada has always considered that certain fundamental principles need to be respected. One of these is Israel's need for security and well-being. At the same time, we believe that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon is a central part of the peace process, and we have continuously upheld that principle. The implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978), which could be achieved through the peace process, is also crucially important.

Finally, as a significant troop contributor to United Nations missions around the world, in which Canadians have risked, and some have lost, their lives, Canada deplores the endangering of the Fijian battalion in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The safety of peace-keepers is an essential condition to the United Nations ability to carry out its peace-keeping responsibilities.

We are pleased that the Security Council was able to agree on the text adopted this evening. It is important that all parties cease military activities and come to a negotiated agreement to bring peace to the region.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Ireland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Campbell (Ireland): The representative of Italy outlined the views of the European Union on the current situation in Lebanon in the Council debate that took place last Monday. The European Union has repeatedly called on all the parties to show the utmost restraint and to cease all military activities in order to end the current cycle of violence.

The tragic events earlier today in southern Lebanon mark a grave deterioration of the current situation and one which can only be viewed with the deepest concern by all interested in securing a lasting peace in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East.

The Government of Ireland earlier today strongly condemned the attack on the headquarters of the Fijian battalion of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which resulted in a large number of civilian deaths and injuries, as well as in injuries to UNIFIL personnel. Such attacks on United Nations facilities are wholly unacceptable. My Government has conveyed its sympathy to the injured and to the families of those killed as well as to the Governments of Lebanon and Fiji.

We reiterate our call on all the parties to respect fully the safety and security of UNIFIL, in which Ireland has served as a major contributor for many years, so that the Force can effectively carry out its mandate. We welcome the clear language to that effect in the resolution that the Council unanimously adopted this evening.

From the outset of the crisis in Lebanon, my Government has been urging all parties to show the utmost restraint and to end hostilities at the earliest opportunity. We have also expressed our grave concern about the growing humanitarian crisis in Lebanon arising from recent developments.

Today's events underline ever more clearly the need for all parties to respond to the appeals, from whatever quarter, for restraint and for an end to violence, which assists only the enemies of peace. My Government is seriously concerned that the spiralling of violence we are now witnessing could, if not quickly halted, pose a serious danger to the Middle East peace process. That must not happen.

We welcome the resolution adopted by the Council this evening, which, together with the ongoing diplomatic initiatives, should achieve the urgent objective of ending the current crisis and avoiding further casualties.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Owada (Japan): In its previous intervention, at the formal meeting of the Security Council on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, held on 15 April, the delegation of Japan expressed its grave concern over the recent developments in Lebanon. These developments are detrimental not only to the interests of those parties directly involved in the Middle East peace process but also to the cause of peace pursued by the international community as a whole.

The recent violence in Lebanon is exacerbating the already tense situation in the region; there is a very real danger that it could jeopardize the peace process itself. We in the international community must do our utmost to prevent the situation from sliding into a vicious circle of violence and retaliation.

Japan was greatly alarmed over the attacks on northern Israel by Hezbollah and by the Israeli counterattacks on Lebanese soil, which have resulted in a large number of casualties, and has called for all the parties concerned to exercise the utmost self-restraint. It is particularly deplorable therefore that today's shelling by Israeli forces on the position of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in southern Lebanon has added tragically to the number of casualties, including many civilians and UNIFIL personnel. This is a development which cannot be justified, whatever its background may have been. In order to prevent the further deterioration of the situation, Japan once again urges all the parties concerned immediately to cease their hostilities and to exercise the utmost self-restraint.

Japan fully endorses the resolution just adopted by the Security Council as an expression of the common will of the international community. My delegation strongly urges the parties concerned to comply fully with the resolution as a first step towards the normalization of the situation.

Japan renews its firm commitment to remain actively involved in international efforts to support the Middle East peace process. The Summit of Peacemakers in the Middle East condemned terrorism unequivocally. As a participant in that Summit, Japan is determined to join international efforts to combat terrorism and to work to ensure that the peace process is put back on track.

At the same time, Japan intends to continue to extend its cooperation to Palestinians for their economic and social development, which is essential to the creation of conditions for lasting peace in the region.

Finally, I would like to express the deep condolences of the Government of Japan to the families

of those who died in the attack, and its sympathy to all those who were injured.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of Cuba. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Parrilla (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): For more than a week the international community and the United Nations have been witnessing one of the most flagrant violations of the most fundamental rules of international law: Israel's new, active aggression against the people of Lebanon. There is not and cannot be any justification of this aggression. As it did in this Chamber only three days ago, Cuba condemns and calls for an end to Israel's aggression against the people of Lebanon.

We demand the following: Israel's implementation of General Assembly resolutions and Security Council resolution 425 (1978); respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty, independence and internationally recognized boundaries of Lebanon; compensation for damage; the return of all the occupied Arab territories; and recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to a State of its own, with Jerusalem as its capital. We join in the appeal to the United Nations and the international community to assist the Lebanese people in their reconstruction efforts.

We regret that it was not possible for the Security Council to adopt draft resolution S/1996/292, which had been submitted by a group of Arab countries. In our view, the credibility of the Security Council is at stake here. Its credibility is already being undermined by its unjustifiable omissions and excesses, by its lack of democracy, by the irrelevance of its decisions and by its abandonment of them, by its headstrong hastiness and by its unacceptable delaying: in other words, by its adoption of a double standard. We all know that the Security Council is very often impotent in the face of the veto. We believe also that a kind of "silent veto" is deployed with the mere threat of a negative vote.

Because it is the truth, we must state that the real source of this latest conflict is the historical impunity for actions taken against Arab nations. The United Nations, for legal, political and ethical reasons, is obliged to support the rights of any State Member against aggression of this kind.

Cuba, which has for more than 35 years been the victim of terrorist acts and acts of aggression that have cost many of our people their lives, has condemned, and continues to condemn, any act of terrorism. But no reason of national security, no reason of state, no pretext associated with international or regional peace and security, and not even a terrorist act could justify aggression, state terrorism, the occupation of territories, the massacre of civilians, the violation of the rules of international humanitarian law or unilateral measures that silently murder children, women and elderly people.

The right of the Lebanese people deserves to be defended. Nowadays, there is much debate over the public image of this Organization; but the problem is not one of image, but one of deeds. The events of recent days have shown that the principles that gave birth to the United Nations are still alive. They have also shown that the practice of the United Nations should be changed only in accordance with those principles and only in their service.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of the United Arab Emirates. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): It gives me pleasure, as Chairman of the Arab Group for this month, to extend to you, Mr. President, our sincere appreciation for your tireless efforts in following the developments of the continued and escalating Israeli aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our sister country, Lebanon. That aggression has so far resulted in the deaths of almost 200 people, in addition to hundreds of injuries and the displacement of about half a million refugees.

In this context, I wish to reiterate our expression of solidarity between all Arab countries and their support for the Government and the people of Lebanon in their painful crisis. The massacres have not yet ceased, and, indeed, escalated this morning with the deliberate Israeli bombardment of a known international area, the headquarters of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. That act of aggression resulted in the deaths of several soldiers in the force, in addition to the deaths of women, the elderly and unarmed children. I wish to express our deep condolences to the Government and the people of Lebanon and to the families of the fallen members of the United Nations Interim Force.

On behalf of the Arab Group, I would like to reiterate our strong condemnation of this act and our call for Israel to comply fully with the norms of international humanitarian law and the provisions of the Fourth

Geneva Convention of 1949. The Security Council should shoulder its responsibility and do its best to preserve international peace and security. The Arab Group again reiterates the need for Israeli aggression against Lebanese territory to cease and the absolute necessity to respect fully the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon. We reiterate the need for the complete withdrawal of the Israeli occupation forces to the internationally recognized borders, in accordance with Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 425 (1978).

I would also like to express our sincere appreciation to all the members of the Council that supported the draft resolution submitted by the Arab Group — the Arab Republic of Egypt, China, Indonesia and Guinea-Bissau. We also wish to express our deep regret with regard to the position taken by the other members of the Council, which abstained when voting on the draft resolution, especially given the fact that the Arab Group's draft resolution is in complete accordance with the basic principles of the United Nations Charter and Security Council resolutions on the Middle East, in particular resolution 425 (1978).

The elements contained in the Arab Group's draft resolution were prepared and submitted to the Council, which should have adopted it in order to send a clear message calling for the immediate cessation of Israeli aggression against Lebanon and calling upon Israel to withdraw immediately to the internationally recognized borders, in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 425 (1978).

We appeal to the international community to provide without delay emergency humanitarian assistance to the people of Lebanon in order to alleviate their suffering and meet their humanitarian needs.

Finally, on behalf of the Arab Group, I call upon this Council to continue to shoulder its responsibility in following the grave developments in Lebanon and to take the necessary measures to put an end to the aggression and massacres, and to undo their consequences, in accordance with international legitimacy and the provisions of international law.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I thank the representative of the United Arab Emirates for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kamal (Pakistan): We have once again assembled today in the Security Council to consider the extremely grave situation in Lebanon. Pakistan strongly deplores and condemns the tragic incident of this morning, which has resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians and Fijian peace-keepers.

On 15 April, we expressed our deep concern over the escalation of hostilities along the Israel-Lebanon border, as well as inside Lebanon. We find the continuation of this conflict reprehensible and deplorable and call for the immediate cessation of hostilities by the Israeli forces.

This escalation of hostilities is neither justifiable nor in keeping with the objective of obtaining a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East. The continuation of these aggressive actions by Israel is further increasing tensions in the region. These premeditated and carefully planned aggressive actions have resulted in civilian casualties, the displacement of thousands of civilians and massive destruction of Lebanon's infrastructure.

Pakistan deplores and condemns the targeting and killing of the civilian population. Pakistan has consistently stressed that Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) continue to provide a viable and just framework for the achievement of a durable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. We also firmly believe that, during the transitional period, Israel, as the occupying Power under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, remains obliged fully to respect and implement the provisions of the Convention and relevant Security Council resolutions in the occupied Arab territories. Resolution 425 (1978) in particular calls for strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon within its internationally recognized boundaries. This resolution also calls upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanon and withdraw forthwith its forces from the territory of Lebanon. Regrettably, this resolution remains not only unimplemented but continues to be flagrantly violated by the Israeli authorities.

The Government and the people of Pakistan are extremely disturbed by these developments in Lebanon and call upon the Security Council to shoulder its responsibility to put an immediate end to these aggressive actions by the Israeli forces. Israel must immediately cease its military actions against Lebanon and withdraw its forces from Lebanese territory. Pakistan also fully

supports the point of view that Lebanon is entitled to be appropriately compensated for the destruction it has suffered at the hands of the Israeli forces.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Takht-Ravanchi (Islamic Republic of Iran): May I begin by expressing our sincere sympathy and condolences to the people and the Government of Lebanon and the bereaved families over the deaths of so many innocent civilians in southern Lebanon, who perished as a result of the deliberate attack of the Zionist army.

Three days ago, the Security Council convened to discuss the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and its brutal bombardment of civilian targets in that country. During that meeting, my delegation elaborated on our position with regard to the issue before the Council and warned that, if the Security Council were not able or willing to take the necessary steps in response to violations of international law by the Zionist regime, the aggressor would be encouraged to continue its aggression.

The crime committed by Israel today in southern Lebanon is, unfortunately, the natural consequence of the inaction of the Security Council. Had the Council avoided double standards and reacted promptly and resolutely against Israeli crimes a week ago, the Zionist regime would not have dared to commit further crimes of this magnitude with impunity.

Today's barbaric act against a United Nations base in Lebanon has resulted in the martyrdom of more than 100 civilians sheltering in that base, including many women and children. Who is to blame? The Zionist regime, which has been deliberately targeting civilian population centres and economic installations in Lebanon, or those who, through their acquiescence and silence towards Zionist crimes or even blame of the victim rather than the aggressor, have in fact given Israel the green light to continue its barbarism?

The dangerous dimensions of the Israeli crimes in Lebanon are so great that they require an urgent reaction from the Security Council to prevent further massacres by the Zionist regime in Lebanon. It is incumbent upon the Security Council to condemn in the strongest terms the continued Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which is the primary reason for the continuation of the crisis in that country, resulting in a high toll of civilian casualties. The Council should also take effective measures to deal with Israeli terrorism. Finally, the Security Council should adopt the measures necessary to implement resolution 425 (1978). Any attempt to disregard or distort this resolution is tantamount to legitimizing the occupation and therefore detrimental to the credibility of the United Nations in general and the Security Council in particular.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): There are no further speakers. The Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 11.35 p.m.